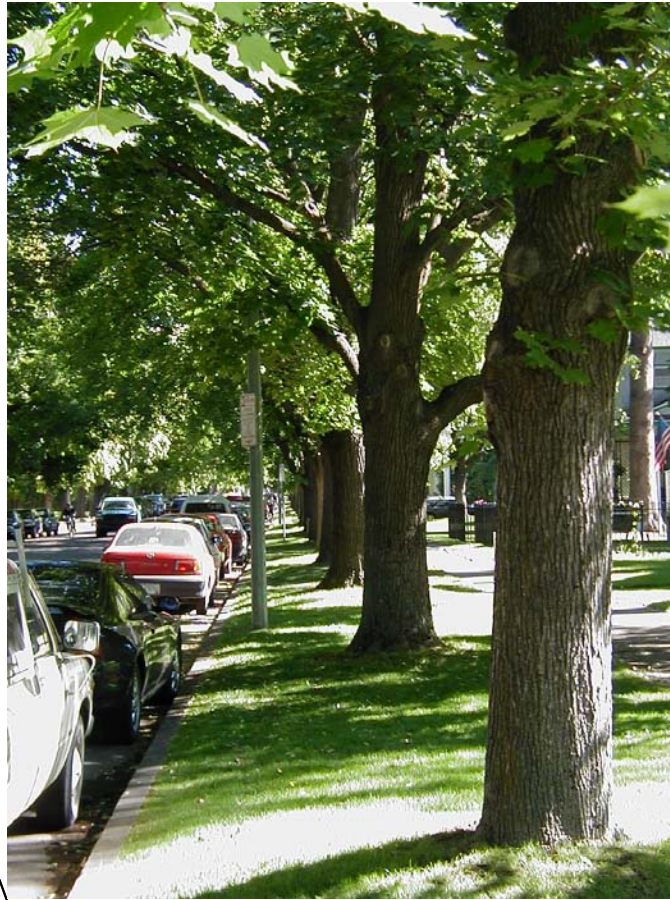


STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2004-2009

Montana Urban & Community Forestry Program



*MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION
FORESTRY DIVISION
SERVICE FORESTRY BUREAU*



The Montana Urban and Community Forestry Program is made available through a grant from the USDA Forest Service to the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC).

A MESSAGE FROM THE MONTANA STATE FORESTER

Managing Forests within Montana's Communities... Trees and landscapes within cities and towns are a critical part of our quality of life, yet taken for granted by most Montanans. Fortunately, Montana has an Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) program that works to help communities improve the condition of their urban forests. This effort is part of a national UCF program, which has the following purpose:

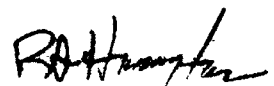
"...States to provide information and technical assistance to units of local government and others that will encourage cooperative efforts to plan urban forestry programs and to plant, protect, maintain, and utilize wood from, trees in open spaces, greenbelts, roadside screens, parks, woodlands, curb areas, and residential developments in urban areas."

Under the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (PL 95-313), the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to provide financial, technical, and related assistance to State Forestry agencies such as Montana DNRC to implement our UCF program. As a condition of this assistance, the US Forest Service has required the following elements for States to fully qualify for support from the Urban and Community Forestry Program:

Establish and maintain a full-time Community Forestry Program Coordinator position
Establish and maintain a full-time Volunteer/Partnership Coordinator
Seek advice on program delivery from an Urban and Community Forestry Council
Reflect program priorities through a State Program Strategic Plan (Five Year Plan)

With the assistance of the Montana Urban and Community Forestry Association (MUCFA), the Montana DNRC presents its "2004-2009 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY." This document charts a course for continued commitment to Montana communities and their urban forest resources. As Montana's community forestry program enters a new era, we are confident that this plan will help guide us toward improving the health and condition of Montana's urban forests.

I thank all of you for your continued efforts toward this goal.



Robert A. Harrington
Montana State Forester

MONTANA URBAN & COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Division of Forestry has been delivering the Urban and Community Forestry Program through funding from the USDA Forest Service since 1992.

The program employs three permanent full-time equivalents (FTE) including two regional community forestry specialists (located in Lake County and Rosebud County) and a statewide coordinator (located in Missoula County). Each regional specialist is responsible for assisting one-half of the state's 56 counties as well as serving as the volunteer coordinator for their respective region, while the state coordinator is responsible for the overall administration and management of the program, serving as the liaison to the International Society of Arboriculture – Rocky Mountain Chapter, as well as some limited field assistance. The primary goals of the program are to provide technical assistance to communities and tree care professionals, provide cost-share grants to communities and outreach to the public on proper tree care techniques and the benefits of community forests.

A citizen advisory group, the Montana Urban and Community Forestry Association (MUCFA), helps determine the emphasis, priorities, and goals of the program. The members represent the geographic diversity of the state and provide a broad spectrum of interests and expertise from which to provide information and advice to the state forester and program staff.

MISSION

The mission of the Montana Urban and Community Forestry Program is to help communities build effective, self-sustaining urban and community forestry programs.

URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY

Urban and community forestry is the comprehensive management of forests and related natural resources in populated areas, from inner city to the developing urban fringe and to small communities. That includes the trees and other vegetation growing in yards, along city streets, in parks and cemeteries, along river corridors or green belts, on school grounds and at businesses.

BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY FORESTS

The state encourages and supports sound management of forest ecosystems in Montana's communities because of the many benefits they provide. Trees and forests in communities:

- Filter air pollutants and dust
- Help recharge ground water and keep sediment and pollutants from streams

- Reduce runoff, flooding and erosion, which, in turn, reduces the cost of engineered controls
- Provide summer shade and protection from winter winds and blowing snow
- Block unsightly views and reduce noise pollution
- Provide shelter and food for wildlife
- Make the environment more attractive to residents, businesses, and tourists
- Increase property values
- Soften the harshness of concrete and glass, and create variety and seasonal changes in the colors and textures in our communities
- Provide natural areas where people can relieve stress and improve their health by recreating, relaxing, socializing and exercising
- Bring the natural environment closer to places people live and work

MONTANA DEMOGRAPHICS

- 902,195 residents
- 147,046 square miles
- 56 counties
- 129 incorporated cities and towns
- 233 total communities
- 6.2 people per square mile
- Ranked 4th largest state in land mass
- Ranked 44th in population
- Ranked 44th in per capita personal income (\$25,920)
- Largest city: Billings (pop. 89,847)
- 87% of all cities and towns have less than 10,000 residents

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Of the 129 incorporated cities, towns and county governments in Montana, only four cities have urban foresters specifically dedicated to managing the communities' municipal natural resources.
- Nearly 45% of Montana's population currently live in a Tree City USA designated community (403,147 residents).
- Eighty-three percent of the eligible population (incorporated cities and towns) resides in Tree City USA communities.
- One-hundred twenty-nine incorporated cities and towns and an additional 100 "communities" seek some or all of their technical assistance from the Montana U&CF Program to build the necessary infrastructure to achieve Tree City USA designation and sustainable community forestry programs.
- As of 2003, of the 233 communities serviced by the program in the state, 132 are participating in the program (57%) at some level. Of the 24 communities located on tribal lands, 14 are participating in the program (58%).
- Since 1991, Montana's Tree City USA communities have spent nearly \$20 million on urban and community forestry programs.

- Since 2001, the Montana U&CF Program has awarded over \$107,000 to nearly 60% of all communities including grants to fund Arbor Day Celebrations, reward Tree City USA designation and develop sustainable U&CF programs in communities.
- Since 2001, U&CF program grants have leveraged over \$330,000 from their local participating partners, over three times the amount distributed.
- In 2003, Montana Tree City USA communities spent over \$2.1 million dollars on U&CF programs (ten times the amount of the state's U&CF allocation).
- Montana communities spend on average \$5 per capita on urban and community forestry programs (2.5 times the amount required for Tree City USA designation).
- Local citizens contributed over 3000 volunteers days to urban and community forestry in Montana in 2003.
- Montana U&CF program staff members provide technical assistance to over one-half of Montana communities including workshops on tree inventory, pruning, tree planting and maintenance, hazard tree reduction and management planning.
- Forty-eight grants have been awarded from the US Forest Service to fund community forestry projects in 28 communities since 1992.
- The Montana U&CF Program sponsors training and speakers at the Annual Conference of the Association of Montana Turf and Ornamental Professionals (AMTOP) providing training opportunities and continuing education units (CEUs) for Montana arborists.
- Montana's grand prize 2003 Arbor Day poster placed third in the National Arbor Day Foundation Poster Contest.
- Thirty-nine communities including one military air base are Tree City USA communities. Cities and towns throughout the state continue to develop programs with the assistance of state program staff and grants and more and more communities are being added to the list each year.
- The program has promoted arborist certification and there are currently 49 International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborists in Montana.

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

The purpose of this plan is to assess urban and community forestry management in Montana and provide direction for future program and policy development. The following goals and objectives will direct the program from January 2004 through December 2009.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

Municipal: Relating to local city/town and county governments and the land associated with municipal governments.

Private: Relating to the general public including home- and landowners and commercial businesses.

Professional: Relating to tree care professional including arborists, nursery owners and operators, etc.



GOAL I. AWARENESS. The public understands the importance and value of community forests, the need for sound community forest management and the services available.

OBJECTIVES:

- Develop a marketing plan that recognizes the unique needs of the different target audience groups served.

TASKS:

- a. Form a Marketing Committee.
RESPONSIBILITY: MUCFA and Program Staff
DEADLINE: April 2004
- b. Consult with DNRC Public Information Officer (PIO) on developing a marketing plan and available training.
RESPONSIBILITY: Committee and Program Coordinator
DEADLINE: September 2004
- c. Draft marketing plan with consultation from PIO for approval from the Association and the State Forester.
RESPONSIBILITY: Committee and Program Coordinator
DEADLINE: February 2005
- d. Finalize marketing plan.
RESPONSIBILITY: MUCFA, Program Coordinator and State Forester
DEADLINE: April 2005

- Implement the marketing plan.

TASKS:

- a. Determine appropriate distribution venues.
RESPONSIBILITY: MUCFA & Program Staff
DEADLINE: December 2004
- b. Develop and distribute media focused on each target audience.
RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff & MUCFA
DEADLINE: June 2005

- Follow-up on the marketing plan to determine its successes and shortcomings.

TASKS:

- a. Evaluate marketing plan for impact and audience reached and implement changes as needed.

RESPONSIBILITY: Committee & Program Coordinator

DEADLINE: Ongoing

- Publish newsletter and website to keep public and partners aware of practices, activities and trends at the state, regional and national levels.

TASKS:

- a. Collect information from various statewide, regional and national sources for publication of newsletter in January, June and September.

RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff

DEADLINE: Ongoing

- b. Maintain and expand urban and community forestry website to provide resources and information on the program.

RESPONSIBILITY: Program Coordinator

DEADLINE: Ongoing

GOAL II. EDUCATION. All practitioners are educated and knowledgeable in current urban and community forestry principles, practices and standards.

OBJECTIVES:

- Develop and provide educational resources and opportunities to the target audiences in an easily accessible manner.

TASKS:

- a. Identify and catalog current resource materials.

RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff

DEADLINE: December 2004

- b. Identify lacking resources materials and create new materials from existing sources or newly produce.

RESPONSIBILITY: MUCFA & Program Staff

DEADLINE: March 2005

- c. Create an electronic resource library in regional forester and coordinator's offices for target audiences.

RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff

DEADLINE: April 2005

- d. Distribute resources materials to target audience(s).

RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff

DEADLINE: Ongoing

- e. Create opportunities for ongoing professional development and advancement.

RESPONSIBILITY: MUCFA and Program Staff

DEADLINE: Ongoing

- f. Provide non-technical education programs, for all ages, on basics of tree biology, tree care and urban & community forestry.

RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff

DEADLINE: Ongoing

- Recognize and support the importance of research in the field of urban and community forestry.

TASKS:

- a. Identify, promote and distribute research from local and national sources regarding Montana urban and community forestry.

RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff

DEADLINE: Ongoing

- b. Serve as proactive clearinghouse for pertinent urban and community forestry information such as pest alerts, environmental conditions and other factors that may affect Montana resources.

RESPONSIBILITY: MUCFA and Program Staff

DEADLINE:

- c. Identify and participate in new and ongoing research opportunities as cooperators with lead researchers.

RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff

DEADLINE: Per Opportunities

GOAL III. COMMUNITY PROGRAM BUILDING. Every Montana community has an opportunity to develop and implement a sustainable urban and community forestry program.

OBJECTIVES:

- Provide technical assistance.

TASKS:

- a. Develop and implement workshops such as grant writing, community forestry master planning/stewardship, etc. in addition to technical tree care workshops.

RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff

DEADLINE: October 2004

- b. Develop support group of professionals to teach community workshops.

RESPONSIBILITY: MUCFA and Program Staff

DEADLINE: Ongoing

- c. Provide assistance to communities based upon their current and long term needs.

RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff

DEADLINE: Ongoing

- Provide financial assistance.

TASKS:

- a. Continue to increase financial support to communities through grant program.

RESPONSIBILITY: MUCFA and Program Coordinator

DEADLINE: Ongoing

- b. Identify potential resources for additional cost share programs.

RESPONSIBILITY: Program Coordinator

DEADLINE: Ongoing

- Monitor programs for growth and progress.

TASKS:

- a. Maintain and cultivate communication with communities and volunteers.

RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff

DEADLINE: Ongoing

- b. Develop and maintain an evaluation mechanism to track progress in community program building.

RESPONSIBILITY: Program Coordinator

DEADLINE: January 2005 / Ongoing

- c. Seek nominations for and present annual community forestry excellence awards showcasing outstanding community forestry programs.

RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff and MUCFA

DEADLINE: Yearly

- Develop leadership, organization and resources within communities to carry out successful community forestry programs.

TASKS:

- a. Promote community adoption of ordinances, arborist standards, tree boards, long-term plans, local volunteer networks and inventories.

RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff

DEADLINE: Ongoing

- b. Continue to promote and observe Arbor Day throughout the state.

RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff

DEADLINE: Ongoing

- c. Encourage community participation in Tree City USA program.

RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff

DEADLINE: Ongoing

GOAL IV. PARTNERSHIPS. Fully integrate a network of supporters throughout the state to work cooperatively toward sound community forestry management.

OBJECTIVES:

- Cultivate current partnerships.

TASKS:

- a. Maintain and enhance association with green industry and community development organizations.

RESPONSIBILITY: MUCFA and Program Staff

DEADLINE: Ongoing

- b. Continue to collaborate with partner organizations to provide collaborative workshops and opportunities.

RESPONSIBILITY: MUCFA and Program Staff

DEADLINE: Ongoing

- Identify and establish new partnerships.

TASKS:

- a. Evaluate other state/regional/national and international organizations for usefulness and future potential collaboration.

RESPONSIBILITY: MUCFA & Program Staff

DEADLINE: Ongoing

- b. Establish relationship with pertinent organizations.

RESPONSIBILITY: MUCFA & Program Staff

DEADLINE: Ongoing

GOAL V. CORE PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND BUILDING. Maintain and expand a successful statewide Urban and Community Forestry Program administered by the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC).

OBJECTIVES:

- Maintain a strong, vibrant and active Montana Urban and Community Forestry Association (MUCFA).

TASKS:

- a. Maintain active involvement and support of MUCFA in activities of existing programs (awards, grants, presentations, etc).
RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff
DEADLINE: Ongoing
- b. Increase diversity of Association members.
RESPONSIBILITY: MUCFA and Program Staff
DEADLINE: Ongoing
- c. Annually produce a work plan and accomplishment report.
RESPONSIBILITY: MUCFA
DEADLINE: Yearly, September
- d. Increase and foster support from state political leaders for the Urban and Community Forestry program.
RESPONSIBILITY: MUCFA
DEADLINE: Ongoing

- Maintain a highly qualified professional program staff to carry out the urban and community forestry goals and objectives.

TASKS:

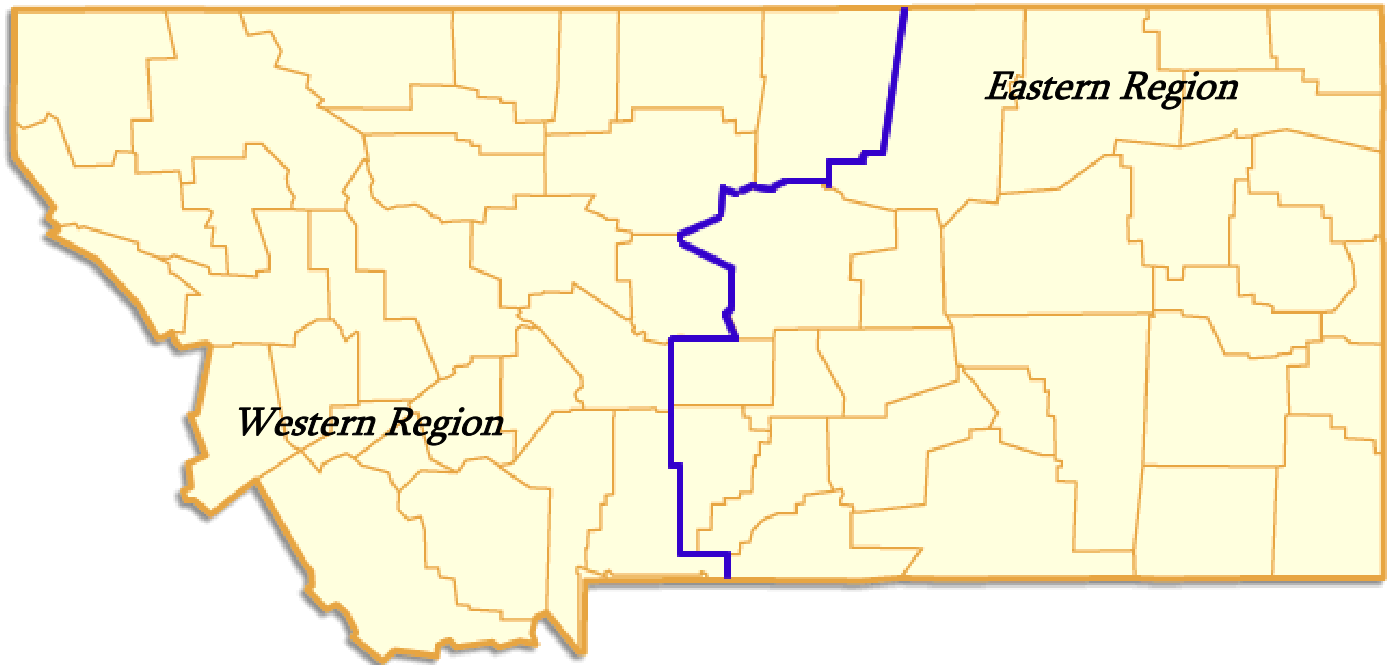
- a. Draft and implement an annual DNRC goals and objectives system.
RESPONSIBILITY: Forestry Division & Staff
DEADLINE: yearly
- b. Maintain appropriate level of DNRC staffing.
RESPONSIBILITY: DNRC Staff & MUCFA
DEADLINE: Ongoing
- c. Encourage non-program staff involvement in U&CF program.
RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff, Service Forestry Bureau and Forestry Division Administration
DEADLINE: Ongoing
- d. Maintain open communication with Forestry Division personnel.
RESPONSIBILITY: DNRC Staff
DEADLINE: Ongoing
- e. Encourage continuing education for Program Staff members.
RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff
DEADLINE: Ongoing
- f. Create and maintain an accomplishment database based upon federal and state reporting system
RESPONSIBILITY: Program Staff
DEADLINE: Ongoing

- Ensure a financially stable source of program funding.

TASKS:

- a. Identify and pursue financial resources that DNRC can use for program administration.
RESPONSIBILITY: MUCFA & DNRC Staff
DEADLINE: Ongoing
- b. Keep current on issues and legislation related to U&CF program (state and national levels).
RESPONSIBILITY: MUCFA & DNRC Staff
DEADLINE: Ongoing

MONTANA URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM REGIONS



REGIONAL COMMUNITY FORESTERS

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PH: 406-883-5599

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Counties served: Beaverhead, Blaine, Broadwater, Cascade, Chouteau, Deer Lodge, Flathead, Gallatin, Glacier, Granite, Hill, Jefferson, Judith Basin, Lake, Lewis and Clark, Liberty, Lincoln, Madison, Meagher, Mineral, Missoula, Park, Pondera, Powell, Ravalli, Sanders, Silver Bow, Teton, and Toole.

Jeff Roe
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Counties served: Big Horn, Carbon, Carter, Custer, Daniels, Dawson, Fallon, Fergus, Garfield, Golden Valley, McCone, Musselshell, Petroleum, Phillips, Powder River, Prairie, Richland, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sheridan, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Treasure, Valley, Wheatland, Wibaux, and Yellowstone.

COMMUNITY FORESTRY COORDINATOR

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